

## Daily life 641

### Chapter 641 Fate of the couple (1)

The couple still had no idea who they had entangled with. Before they just assumed it was another one of those allies of the Deer Mountain Kingdom.

Even if Yen Xu's abilities shocked them, especially with how effortlessly they were captured, they were not all that worried. The worst that could happen to them was dying and they had thought themselves long indifferent to life and death, especially with the death of their daughter, death looked like a welcomed relief to them.

And if they weren't killed, they figured at some point in time the fire adler bear may rescue them or some of the powerful spirit beasts who had long ventured out of the range could come back and rescue them when they heard that human domain experts were roaming their territory.

The couple may not know the exact number of spirit beasts that had reached the domain realm in the Deer Mountain Range, but they knew of two, one was the fire adler bear's master who was terrifying in her own might, and the other was the metal moon tornado lynx.

The Deer Mountain Range was considered a free-for-all, with no overlord in place. Even the fire adler bear's master, as powerful as she was never dared hold that title because there had been one spirit beast that had once conquered the whole range with his terrifying abilities but left soon after when he found no one capable of holding their own against him.

It was heard that he had decided to venture into the green fog region to test his mettle against the spirit beasts that inhabited who were famed for their strength considering the forest had never been conquered by humans for as long as the green fog region has been there.

Even after he left, his seat as the undisputed overlord of the Deer Mountain Range remained, and other spirit beasts since then have tried to replicate his feats, but no one has been able to. Some even went to the extent of venturing into the Green Fog Region just as he did, which favored the Deer Mountain Kingdom because had those spirit beasts been around, the kingdom could have forgotten about gaining a foothold in the range.

The couple had been placing their bets on one of those spirit beasts coming back. Even though they were not as powerful as the lynx, they were much more powerful than them as a few had even been able to hold their own against the fire adler bear's master.

If they came back, flattening the Deer Mountain Kingdom and the branch would not be an impossibility even if with someone like Yen Xu present.

However, that four-day trip made them thoroughly aware of how naive they had been in their thoughts.

They thought Yen Xu was the most powerful figure at the branch, but then they met Fan Tao, a terrifying beast in human skin who killed spirit beasts that made their insides churn, as effortlessly as swatting a fly.

Then there were the inhabitants of that forest. Any one of them was capable of running roughshod on the Deer Mountain Range, let alone the owners of those catastrophic roars.

The couple may have never been able to see the true strength of the metal moon tornado lynx but they had doubts about whether the lynx would be able to conquer the inhabitants of that forest as he did the Deer Mountain Range, let alone survive even a day against them.

The abilities and power they saw, were something they could never imagine, which was why the male obsidian serpent assumed they had to be from a holy land, and if they were, they pitted themselves against the hardest wall there was. Death was the least of their worries. They couldn't help but fear that their actions may have implicated every spirit beast in the Deer Mountain Range.

"No, we are not from a holy land.." answered Yang Qing which drew a look of confusion from the couple.

Considering what they saw, only the rumored holy lands could be that powerful in their mind. But if they weren't then how powerful were holy lands

Yang Qing seeing their perplexed looks couldn't help but explain to them about the Order to help with the confusion and maybe their fear.

"There is something like that?" muttered the elderly man in surprise.

"That level of strength makes sense.." he added with a defeated smile.

Some part of him thought them being a holy land may have been easier to swallow rather than an organization that supervises the entire continent. The latter seemed much more domineering in his mind.

"You really had nothing to do with Qin'er's death?" asked the lady next to the elderly man after she had summoned enough courage to talk despite being the most talkative of the two when Yang Qing was last here.

"We didn't.." firmly answered Yang Qing.

The couple couldn't help but sigh at the response. With what they saw, they already believed it, and asking was just them hoping it wasn't when they considered the repercussions of their actions, especially the lady who had eaten one of their members during the fight.

"What is it you want to know?" asked the elderly man with a sense of tiredness washing over his body.

"We can start with your names.." said Yang Qing.

"I am Bai Zhen, this is my dao partner, Bai Su, and our daughter.." the elderly paused as a pained look appeared on his face.

"Our daughter was called Bai Qin.." he said with a low despotic tone.

Tears dripped from Bai Su's eyes as she leaned her head toward the elderly man called Bai Zhen.

"I know you know the fire adler bear.." said Yang Qing which drew shocked looks from the couple.

However, Yang Qing didn't stop there.

"I also know that your daughter had a purer bloodline of a flood dragon than you. I detected it at the battleground, and I know the fire adler bear had something to do with the evolution.

I saw the foundation circle he took her to..."

"The foundation circle is the places where he took her to refine her body.." added Yang Qing when he saw the confusion when he mentioned the foundation circle.

"Is Adler ..." Bai Zhen hesitantly asked with trepidation in his tone.

"He isn't dead nor have we captured him.." answered Yang Qing when he noticed the shakiness in Bai Zhen's voice and the hesitant, fearful, and guilt-ridden look in his eye.

"What I want to know is, how did your daughter achieve the evolution, and by the looks of it you too.

You don't seem to have gone through the same process as her, but somehow two evolutions happened.." asked Yang Qing.

Chapter 642 Fate of the couple (2)

"The evolution happened because of a treasure bone.." Bai Zhen said after a short silence.

"A treasure bone?!" asked Yang Qing with widened eyes of disbelief.

"Yes, a treasure bone.." said Bai Zhen with a sigh.

"How did you even end up with something like that?" asked Yang Qing still in surprise from the revelation.

Forming a wisdom pearl was a diving threshold for spirit beasts. Only those with a certain level of talent were able to form one.

The wisdom pearl contained their insights and achievements in a particular dao and was extremely valuable to both spirit beasts and humans too.

However, as precious as it was, one million wisdom pearls filled with in-depth insights into the Dao wasn't as valuable as a single speck from a treasure bone.

The treasure bone, also known as the mark of the saint, was something formed when a spirit beast reached the soul formation realm.

To a spirit beast no matter the heights of cultivation they reach, their bodies still remain their greatest capital and that fact remains true when they reach the soul formation realm.

Of course, there are exceptions such as those whose abilities are soul-based but even for them, their bodies do still play a part in their growth.

For spirit beasts who use their fleshly body to traverse the confines of the domain realm, they get another name when they successfully breakthrough which is the equivalent of the soul formation realm, that realm is called the sacred sovereign realm.

At this stage, whether the spirit beast has a noble bloodline or not, bloodline suppression no longer affects them. They have stepped beyond its bounds and established a bloodline unique only to themselves.

The tribulation lightning they face when breaking through obliterates and reforms them anew, and in the end, should they survive it, their entire body is transformed and filled with the same power that forms the world around them. However, it takes different variations depending on the mastery of the spirit beast.

Their flesh, blood, skin, internal organs, and every other inch of their bodies are baptized with the aura of the origin dao. Their bodies end up filled with dao markings and glyphs just like how Yang Qing has a few because of his peerless jade physique.

Those dao markings are what the spirit beasts contemplate to improve their cultivation. Their next steps are literally branded to them and when they die, those markings disappear except the ones that are in their bones.

Their bones contain their entire life's accumulation and are no different from a saint-grade natural treasure, hence the name, treasure bone.

Should a spirit beast stumble even to the tiniest piece of a treasure bone, their fortunes are instantly transformed. A whole roadmap leading to the soul formation realm is instantly opened up to them and they only need to follow it.

It didn't only benefit spirit beasts as human cultivators could also contemplate the dao markings for the profundities that lay within it like some old tome and improve themselves.

If the obsidian serpent couple had a treasure bone, evolving into a flood dragon was more than possible.

But how did they end up with a treasure bone of a flood dragon? flood dragons were notoriously powerful, famous for holding their own even against those stronger than them, let alone a flood dragon that had reached the sacred sovereign realm.

How did the obsidian couple get their hands on something so rare?

"Adler had a piece of it which he offered to share with my daughter.." said Bai Zhen.

"Where did he even get such a thing? and how come he handed it to you and not used it himself?" asked Yang Qing.

Handing out a treasure bone was no different than handing out a saint-grade treasure.

"From the moment he made the suggestion, I found myself asking myself that very question every single day since.." said Bai Zhen with a wry smile.

"I could never quite understand him sometimes, despite having known each other for almost 10,000 years.." he added with a shake of his head.

"Did he receive it from his master?" asked Yang Qing, increasingly feeling that it was likely to be the case.

"He did.."

As if anticipating that Yang Qing would ask how his master got a hold of it in the first place, Bai Zhen added,

"His master got it from someone else, though she never told the fire adler bear much, other than it was an unfathomable figure and he was the one that gave her a chance at rebirth.

When she left, she had left precisely to search for that unfathomable figure.."

The gears in Yang Qing's mind instantly started turning as to who that unfathomable figure could be before it slowly fell on the middle-aged man they shared drinks and meals with.

While talking, the middle-aged man said he had forgotten something in the Deer Mountain Range and had come to check on it to which Yang Qing had strong suspicions that the forgotten thing the middle-aged man was talking about was the sword embryo being refined by the flames produced by the egg of a Bifang Niao.

Other than coming to check on the forgotten object, the middle-aged said he was also checking on a friend but he missed them.

Though it was far-fetched, Yang Qing had a feeling that maybe the fire adler bear's master and the middle-aged man were connected. Otherwise, how could his master have gotten her hands on the treasure bone of a sacred sovereign realm spirit beast?

In his mind, someone who could fashion a wine gourd with wood from the empyrean world jade tree, a king among jade trees, was exactly the same type of person who would casually give out a treasure bone from a spirit beast that had reached the human equivalent of the soul formation realm, and a flood dragon nonetheless.

What were the odds that the Deer Mountain Range was occasionally frequented by multiple unfathomable figures? It was their luck that even one, in the name of the middle-aged man, came by at all.

The Deer Mountain Range may be rich in resources, to the point it may rival some rank 2 kingdoms, but that was insufficient to draw in the eyes of people at the level of the middle-aged man.

Therefore Yang Qing felt it was highly likely that the middle-aged man was acquainted with the fire adler bear's master and that may have even been the reason he had decided to stop by Meifeng's cavern.

It had nothing to do with his beggar's rice wine or the fried scallops which were Shi Hai's best work, or the radiant look of the parasitic purple flower spore sycamore tree. It had more to do with Meifeng's relationship with the fire adler bear's master.

Someone as skilled as the middle-aged man could likely trace her aura to Meifeng considering she spent some time with the sycamore tree and was like a mother to her, and without a treasure that shielded her karma from being spied on, Meifeng's past could have been easily deduced by the middle-aged man, which was why he came there in the first place or rewarded her with the purest yin energy he had ever seen.

Chapter 643 Fate of the couple (3)

It took a minute before Yang Qing consolidated his thoughts together. The couple didn't interrupt him as they too had thoughts of their own to arrange which were largely centered on their fate, the fate of the Deer Mountain Range, and if they would even get the chance to avenge their daughter.

"Did his master not use the treasure bone to complete her evolution?" asked Yang Qing once he had finished arranging his thoughts.

"She did use it, but not to evolve into a flood dragon even though it would have been easier for her to evolve into a complete flood dragon unlike me or my daughter.



Her constitution suited it perfectly but she didn't want to abandon her true form and opted to just use it to strengthen her bloodline and foundations while contemplating the dao markings within it..."

It was Bai Su who answered this time, with a gaze of worship.

"She wanted to walk forward with her original form. I am not sure many would make the same choice.." she added.

"It seems you're acquainted with her?" asked Yang Qing when he saw Bai Su smile for the first time since he met her.

"I did when I was just a fledgling in the core formation realm and didn't know better. She saved me from being eaten.." answered Bai Su as her gaze flickered.

"I know my talent well enough. If it wasn't for your constant sacrifices Zhen'er, I wouldn't have reached the heights that I've reached.

Even now I can tell, my potential has already been exhausted. This is as far as I will ever reach and I am okay with it, but Qin'er I hoped she could reach her heights someday. I hoped our daughter would soar to the skies and see a world I could never see.." she added with sorrow in her tone.

"I am sorry you had me for a wife, and our daughter had me for a mother. I failed you both.." she said as tears slowly trickled down her cheeks.

"I am not. You and Qin'er are my greatest accomplishments.." firmly said Bai Zhen as cast a gentle gaze on Bai Su.

"But I am glad you're more self-aware now of how lucky you are to have me. Back then you even tried to eat me and when that didn't work you even schemed with adler and badger to give me a beating..." Bai Zhen cheekily said drawing a smile from his wife.

"You were arrogant back then. I couldn't stand your smug look, the same look you're showing right now. Seems like the beatings were not enough.." said Bao Su with a teasing threatening smile.

Yang Qing didn't interrupt as he wondered to himself if he would ever have something similar. A certain nosey purple-haired gossip hoarder appeared in his mind before he hurriedly shook his head to clear his thoughts. He still had questions that needed answering.

Once the couple had settled down, he asked,

"So whatever was left behind after contemplation, she gave it to the fire adler bear?" asked Yang Qing.

"Yes. Even though Adler wasn't a match with it for evolution he could at least contemplate the profundities contained within it to improve himself.

Even without using it for evolution, it was still precious and had wonderful benefits. But he wanted to be like his master.." said Bai Zhen with a laugh.

"I don't know whether it's true or not, Adler likes to exaggerate things all the time. But he told me the real reason his master didn't use the treasure bone for evolution was because if she was to evolve, she wanted it to be into a true dragon and not a poisonous snake that shared its name.

Only as a true dragon would she feel worthy of telling the senior who had given her the treasure bone, that his efforts were not wasted.

Adler decided to adopt the same stance as hers and decided to pave his own way forward so that when his master came back she would think he had grown and wasn't the same troublemaker cub he had been back then.

I think that's the reason he was so close to our daughter. It was his way of showing he had really matured. Though he was still just as cheeky as the oversized mischievous cub I knew back then.." Bai Zhen said with a smile.

"He was.." echoed Bai Su with a smile of her own.

"The foundation circle I was talking about; the blood pond, the harmonic garden filled with plants of different elements, the lake with inner flame mosaic flower, and the region with the sunset heart-seeking boulder, did Adler set it all up was it the doing of his master?" asked Yang Qing getting to the real thing he wanted to know about.

"At first we thought it was his master's doing but Adler smugly said it wasn't and it was his doing.

But I didn't believe him. I know him well enough to know he doesn't have any of the skills required to create something like that.

He kept insisting it was all him, and it was only when I threatened to not let my daughter try did he finally fess up.

The design was made by a resident of this range, an eclipse spiritweave fox that went by the name of Jiang Xiang.

He may have not been the most combative spirit beast, but he had been one of the leading figures of the range once upon a time, especially as a mediator, and his talents even extended to humans.

Because of this aura of tranquility and serenity, he can form friendships easily and make even the most volatile of spirit beasts, calm down.

He was well-liked and the range enjoyed a period of peace thanks to him, however, he left to explore the outside world and try to be a merchant or a scholar or something of the sort. He was always fascinated by humans and their different facets when it came to personality and their ingenuity with cultivation arts.

He was always curious. I think it was about seven thousand years ago, and he was at the sixth or seventh stage of the palace realm, he decided to venture outside, up until two thousand years ago when he briefly came back, which was the time he met with Adler..."

Bai Zhen paused for a bit and continued.

"Adler told me Jiang Xiang had managed to join a merchant company by the name of the White Rose Pavilion. I don't know much about it, but from the way he put it, it has to be something big in your world.."

"It is, they're pretty powerful and widespread. Jiang Xiang must have been talented to get a job there.." said Yang Qing which drew a surprised look from the couple.

After seeing a bit of the depth of the Order, for the White Rose Pavilion to garner such a remark from a member of the Order, the pavilion had to be powerful.

Bai Zhen and his wife had assumed the fire adler bear embellished some of the information, so he could receive their cooperation in letting their daughter go through with the evolution process.

Chapter 644 Fate of the couple (4)

"Adler already had the intention of giving my daughter whatever was left of the treasure bone he was left with, but even he knew he couldn't give it straight to her without sufficient preparations.

So when Jiang Xiang appeared before him, he shared his woes with him. Jiang Xiang was known to be knowledgeable about a lot of things, and with his experience in the human world, he was bound to know more.

Adler has ventured out of the Deer Mountain Range before, unlike us, who have never taken a single step outside, so he must have known the implications of working for the White Rose Pavilion which is what I think was a factor in why he divulged that he had a treasure bone to Jiang Xiang.." said Bai Zhen.

Yang Qing nodded though, in his mind, he told himself the fire adler bear was too trusting and too reckless by opening up he had a piece of a treasure bone in his possession.

This was an item that would cause rank 2 organizations that have been allies for tens of thousands of years to immediately wipe away the relationship and tear at each other all for the chance of getting their hands at the treasure bone.

Kingdom would turn against kingdom, subjects would turn against their king, neighbor would turn against neighbor, friend would turn against friend, student would turn against master, brother would turn against brother, and son would turn against father.

Every sacred bond ran the risk of being shredded to pieces the moment a treasure bone appeared and the fire adler bear willingly divulged he had such a thing, to a resident, someone he had not seen in close to four thousand years.

Yang Qing couldn't help but wonder how trusting he was or was his mind beguiled.

An eclipse spiritweave fox had abilities related to the soul. They had something called the eclipse vision that could induce trance-like states into subjects, sometimes it was a good thing, as it could help the person concentrate or prevent an agitated internal demon from exploding, and in other cases, it left the subject of the vision susceptible to coercion.

Yang Qing wondered if the fire adler bear was a victim of the latter. But he immediately rejected the notion.

A spirit beast capable of reaching the quasi-domain realm and even rejecting the use of something as precious as a treasure bone had to have strong willpower which was the best defense against mental-based attacks.

"Jiang Xiang was the one who helped him lay the whole thing down. He told Adler that the method was a tried and proven method that humans used to strengthen their bodies to the point that it would rival or even exceed that of spirit beasts.

He was the one who, through his connections procured the sunset heart-seeking boulder and the inner flame mosaic flower.

Together, he and Jiang Xiang laid out the whole thing, and in exchange for his help, Adler gave him a tiny piece of the treasure bone. It was about this size.." said Bai Zhen as he separated his index finger and thumb to show the measurement.

The space in between the two fingers was enough for a blade of grass to barely fit through. It may seem small, but such a small piece contained enough insights and profundities to last a domain expert several lifetimes contemplating it.

"What about the one he gave your daughter?" Yang Qing curiously asked.

"It was about this wide, and this long.."

The size depicted by Bai Zhen was a girth of about 4mm and the length was about two centimeters.

Yang Qing nodded as he motioned for Bai Zhen to continue.

"After the whole thing was set, Jiang Xiang left. Adler never told him who it was for. After he left, Adler told us of his plan, which was to let Qin'er absorb the treasure bone and have her undergo the evolution.

We were ill at ease at first, by the whole thing. We may have not traveled at all, but we know how precious a treasure bone is from our bloodline memories and the sensation we got the moment we saw it.

The bone wasn't even the size of my eye, but it radiated with a power so unfathomable and boundless that it looked like it could contain an entire galaxy within it.

I felt so small and overwhelmed before it. I never felt something quite like it.."

Bai Zhen went silent as he shared a complicated look with his wife Bai Su.

When he and his wife saw the treasure bone and its grandness, they thought nothing could ever surpass that feeling, but in the past few days that notion was obliterated because they did feel a power just as grand as the treasure bone, and it was much much scarier even.

Pushing those negative thoughts aside, Bai Zhen continued.

"Eventually we relented though we didn't need much convincing anyway. This was a chance to change the fate of our child, so of course we were going to jump at it.

We were there every step of the way as Adler helped her refine and strengthen her body, soul, mind, and heart. The process took almost 200 years before Adler was satisfied that she could handle the destructive and overwhelming process of the evolution.

He then took out an ancient-looking scroll, wrapped the treasure bone around it, and muttered some strange incantation as he placed the scroll on my daughter's back.

The scroll .."

Just as he was about to continue, Yang Qing interrupted him.

"The strange incantation, do you remember it?"

"For some reason, i only remember aspects of it, and it's jumbled at that., what about you Bai Su?" Bai Zhen said as he directed the question to his wife.

"It's jumbled for me too, though I do remember feeling a cry coming from deep within my blood when he mumbled the incantation. It was like my ancestors were resonating with it.." said Bai Su with furrowed brows as she tried to recall the sensation from that day.

"Mythical beast incantation.." absent-mindedly muttered Yang Qing when he heard Bai Su's description.

It was something he had seen happen at the beast hall.

Chapter 645 Fate of the couple (5)

"Mythical beast incantation?" asked Bai Zhen with a puzzled expression.

Yang Qing's dazed eyes focused back as he answered,

"Mythical beast incantation is known as the language of the mythical beings. The mythical beings, in this case, are the likes of dragons, phoenixes, kumpengs, black tortoise, white tiger, Qilin, the vermilion bird, and the like.

Even beings like the ancient tree folk and golems feature here.

It is said they are able to call on a special power within the force of the world with their voices. A language that beckons the world, the Origin Dao itself.." said Yang Qing with a mystified gaze as he clenched his fists together with fascination.

"That voice I don't know by whom was transcribed into a language dubbed the 'mythical language'.

The language is notoriously difficult to learn and one can easily lose their mind in the attempts to learn, and even when they do learn it, it's difficult to execute it as it needs the body of those mythical beings to execute it fully.

Without it, you're liable to have your body explode if you attempt to execute it. That being said, the toll and difficulty can be reduced if you break the language into tiny parts, and just execute one single part of those small parts.." said Yang Qing with an inscrutable gaze.

"The degree of difficulty isn't to be underestimated though, because only one in a hundred thousand are able to learn it or execute it without suffering irreparable damage.

When executed, if a spirit beast is nearby or even spiritual plants, or people with bloodlines related to either of the mentioned groups, it triggers a reaction within them. The lineage call of their ancestors.

It's the feeling you have just described.." said Yang Qing as his gaze fell on Bai Su.

"From your reactions, it seems Adler never told you what the incantation was," Yang Qing added as he saw their baffled looks.

"He didn't, he only said it was an important key for smoothening the process and reducing the risks.



That explains why he was barely able to stand at the end. He lied and said he was dizzy from controlling some array. I didn't believe him because the weakness wasn't just spiritual exhaustion.

Every part of him felt worn, but I didn't press it because I was too eager and nervous for anything else other than my daughter to complete the evolution..." Bai Zhen said with a guilt-ridden sigh.

"Did he say where he got the incantation? Though from the arrangements, it's safe to assume he may have gotten it from Jiang Xiang.." said Yang Qing.

"I don't know, I never bothered to ask. I was too anxious at the time.." Bai Zhen said with a slight embarrassment in his tone.

Yang Qing nodded in understanding as he said,

"What happened next?"

"Gold vines filled with runes appeared from the scroll which then lodged themselves into Qin'er's body.

The treasure bone looked like it had dissolved into the gold vines which then transmitted them to my daughter.

As prepared as I thought we were, we weren't.." Bai Zhen said with a faint shiver in his eyes as he recalled the events.

"Her body burst apart, her screams never stopped for three years straight. It was a horrendous atmosphere that quickly drove me so mad that I almost interrupted the process multiple times, and I would have, had Adler not forcibly restrained me all those times.

I kept asking myself is this really worth it? Is it really worth it to subject my daughter to such torment all for so she could evolve into a flood dragon? is it really bad for her to remain as she is?

We may not have a noble ancestry like the flood dragon but being an obsidian serpent isn't bad.

Up until a few weeks ago, i thought and believed it was worth it, especially after seeing the leaps in improvement she made, but now..

Was it really worth it?" he softly said as his countenance turned bleak and sorrowful.

Bai Su tried to muffle her cry but that didn't stop the tears from rapidly falling down her cheeks.

"She went through unimaginable torment in those three years, till finally, her voice could no longer keep up with the pain.

At year five, I honestly thought she was dead because of how faint her presence was, and her body could no longer be seen beneath the blood and the vine.

It was during the eighth year that finally we saw some turn. Her vitality slowly grew from the faint candlelight it was to a small kindling fire.

Her life force slowly increased from that point which was a welcomed relief for us and a growing tether for our sanity.

Just like that fifteen years slowly passed us by with her still wrapped in the golden vines like a cocoon. Though her body still seemed to be a mangled mess, we felt her blood slowly transforming and then her cultivation base started increasing.

At the time of the evolution, she was at the first stage of the core formation realm. Adler had said she couldn't do it when she was in the foundation establishment realm as she would not be able to endure the toll demanded by an evolution and she could not do it later than the first stage of the core formation realm if we wanted to avoid complications.

It was because of our conflicting nature with flood dragon elements that she had to go through many hurdles before she could start the evolution. And once started, it couldn't be stopped.

Her cultivation base rose to the second stage and it increased every year after that until she reached the peak of the core formation realm.

The increase would have been faster, had Adler not deliberately slowed it down for her sake. The next twenty years were spent firming her foundations over and over as the evolution repetitively refined her body.

It took seventy years for the vines to finally show movements as they receded into her body. We finally caught a glimpse of her body. Pristine white, with a sense of majesty to it.." Bai Zhen with a smile of pride on his face which Bai Su seemed to share.

"The vines dissolved at a snail's pace and it took almost eight years before we could finally see her complete body. She only had a bit of vine left where her heart was. We thought we were through the worst of it, but her body could no longer take any more power from the remaining vine, and it threatened to destroy her body which is where Adler had me quickly step in and take over the remaining load.

Luckily, the energy contained within the final vines was something I could assimilate without prior preparation. Even then I still felt like my body was shredded apart, which made me realize how strong Qin'er was to have endured all that and survived it..

With the final vine out of the way, me, my wife and Adler stayed with her for almost two hundred years to help her acclimate to her newfound powers whilst also preparing her for her breakthrough to the palace realm.

She managed to weather through the tribulation, which was the biggest I've ever seen. Adler left soon after she had stabilized her realm in the palace realm, while we decided to leave her to herself fifty years after that, for her to now pave her own way and reach heights we could only ever dream of.

She occasionally visited us, after that, but mostly she kept to herself, living her own life. We never imagined we would lose her so easily, after what we went through.." Bai Zhen weakly said as he used his hands to cover his face.

Chapter 646 Merging thoughts

The trio all stewed in silence, each swallowed by their thoughts. The obsidian serpent couple wallowed in grief and endless regret wishing they could turn time back and arrive even a second earlier to prevent the death of their daughter.

Every waking moment since the death of their daughter, Bai Zhen has spent thinking if he could have done things differently. The things he would change given the chance.

A few days ago before he had been taken by the member of the Beast Hall of the Order, one of his biggest regrets was having his daughter undergo the evolution into a flood dragon. There was no doubt in his mind that she had been targeted because of it. He was filled with endless regret and pain for allowing it, and a bit of that regret even boiled to resentment and anger towards the Fire Adler Bear for even suggesting it to him.

But now, after his experience at the Bestial Churning Sea, the Blood Charcuterie Market Town, and the purple twilight forest, he had since changed his stance on the matter. He realized how terrifying it was out there and the need for outstanding strength.

Right now, the only regret he had was the hubris he had when he thought the Deer Mountain Range was safe and that nothing would happen to their daughter.

All because she was at the palace realm, and her evolution into a flood dragon was already complete, he felt that nothing could happen to her. Her evolving bloodline ensured even though she was at the first stage of the palace realm, she could hold her own against anyone by virtue of her bloodline, and if she couldn't, she had a special call that would alert her late-stage palace realm parents, with one of them even having a variant flood dragon bloodline. Surely they would be able to handle anything that came their way.

After absorbing part of the treasure bone that his daughter had failed to refine, Bai Zhen could feel the drastic transformation the treasure bone was causing in his body. Everything had been strengthened and transformed.

Obsidian serpents were famed for their defenses because of their deep affinity with the earth element. As a late-stage palace realm obsidian serpent, long before he refined the treasure bone, his scales could already deflect and even break monarch-grade weapons used by the humans, and some spirit beasts at the palace stage could forget about penetrating his scales with their claws.

He could sleep through their attacks without doing anything and still be fine. And when he refined the remaining fragments of the treasure bone, his defense was improved further by multiple levels. Some part of him felt that he could hold his own even against peak palace stage powerhouses as his scales, other than improved sturdiness, had a dao charm surrounding them that was not there before.

The Dao charm acted as another layer of protection that not only protected against physical attacks but spiritual attacks too, especially the thorny attacks from human cultivation spells.

He felt invulnerable to any attack. He believed other than the fire adler bear, no one within the Deer Mountain Range could harm him and with the only threat being a dear friend, he had absolutely nothing to worry about within the range.

He even had half a mind to visit the Deer Mountain Kingdom and test his newfound abilities on them but ultimately held back as he loved soaking in the sun and the earth element more than anything else and he wasn't one to cause trouble but if provoked he wasn't afraid of retaliating in kind, more even.

With the changes happening to him and his daughter, he believed everywhere within the Deer Mountain Range was his backyard, which was why he never kept a close eye on his daughter and let her establish her territory and live as she pleased, and if she ever ended up in trouble she couldn't handle, with his newfound abilities, he would be able to handle whatever came their way.

He grimly found out how naive and disillusioned he had been. He had grossly overestimated his capabilities and the safety of the Deer Mountain Range.

His daughter died before he could even reach her, and when he tried to punish those who took her life, the defense he thought was impenetrable, failed him.

Cultivators weaker than him, those he thought couldn't so much as leave a scratch on him, battered his body, and the invulnerable fortress he thought his body was, was revealed to be flesh and blood.

Anger from seeing his daughter's lifeless body was the only thing that kept him from being mortified and shocked in that fight. And when he had a brief moment of respite after they had forced an escape, he remembered thinking to himself;

Who were those two cultivators?

There had been other cultivators present of similar rank, and there were even two that had been sly in their means of attacks, which he now knows were members of the Blue Soul Flame Crow Syndicate, but within that chaos, there were two, who gave him, his wife, and the two sly attackers trouble.

Despite covering for their weaker compatriots against the attacks of him, his wife, and the two deacons of the Syndicate, they still managed to hold the line and still threaten their lives.

Had it been a fight to the death with just him and his wife against the two of them, how would it have gone?

At the time, when those thoughts were looming in his mind, he felt his chances of winning were high though in the best-case scenario, he would end up with permanent injuries that may cripple him for life as a trade-off, and at worst, they would all perish together.

But now, after experiencing the might and foundations of the Order, he felt there was a high chance, he and his wife would have died.

He thought he was an unnamed king of the Deer Mountain Range, unaware of the dangers that lurked within it.

The lessons of his hubris were paid for with his daughter's life, which was something that continuously ate at him.

"Maybe after I avenge her, I can go join her.." he thought as his gaze fell on his wife.

"Forgive me Su'er, we promised to stay together to the end, but I don't know, I can't stand the thought of letting our daughter, take the next journey alone..." thought Bai Zhen as another guilt towards his wife was slowly budding within him.

What he didn't know was his wife had the same intention. Her guilt ran deeper than Bai Zhen's.

She always felt inferior and unworthy of Bai Zhen from when they were young which was why she always avoided him and was reluctant to respond to his advances, but eventually, he wore her down and she relented.

But even then, she always felt like an interloper in his life. She always felt that her talents were unworthy of him. He was the sun and she was a firefly at the end of its twilight and her guess was proven to be true, as Bai Zhen ended up spending all his energy and resources just to help her reach the stage she reached today.

It was to the extent that he gave up parts of his blood essence and wisdom pearl to help her leap into the seventh stage of the palace realm.

Guilt-ridden and ashamed of her own inferiority which caused her husband to sacrifice so much for her, she grew up strongly desiring that her daughter never walked the same path as her.

She had feared her poor bloodline would mar her daughter's future. Therefore when the opportunity to change the circumstances presented itself, she was quick to grab hold of it.

She was friends with the fire adler bear before Bai Zhen, and he later became friends with him through her. The fire adler bear had told her about the treasure bone in his possession, and despite wanting to share it with his daughter to help improve her aptitude, he was reluctant to use it on her due to the inherent risks it had which could result in the death of her daughter if not properly addressed.

At the time, he had not met with Jiang Xiang. However, despite knowing of the risks involved, Bai Su was willing, bordering on desperate for the fire adler bear to let her daughter consume the treasure bone.

Her possibly dying from the process, wasn't as scary to Bai Su as her future possibly being ruined because she had her for a mother. Some part of her, even though it would be a relief if she died. Because then, she wouldn't always feel this overwhelming fear and guilt every time she saw her as she thought to herself, that this was yet another thing she had failed her husband in.

Luckily for her, the fire adler bear met with Jiang Xiang. The fire adler bear would not have engaged with Jiang Xiang or revealed the existence of the treasure bone, had Bai Su not insisted.

Jiang Xiang's solutions remedied whatever potential risks that were there, however, he still told them there was a chance of death for her daughter, with the treasure bone overwhelming her, despite the measures put in place.

Bai Su managed to convince the fire adler bear not to tell her husband of the risks because he knew him well. He would not risk it, if there was a chance Bai Qin would be in mortal danger.

They kept him in the dark through all of it. His act of jumping in to refine the remnant fragment was a short in the dark by the fire adler bear. He wasn't sure it would work. Unable to look his friend in the eye for lying to him, the fire adler bear left after ensuring there were no complications or hidden dangers to their daughter.

When Bai Qin successfully evolved, Bai Su was relieved more than anything, relieved that her daughter would no longer have her blood and poor talent in her.

That relief overwhelmed even the joy of her daughter becoming a flood dragon and with it, it slowly washed away the regrets and inferiority Bai Su had carried over the years.

But then...Bai Qin died, and all those emotions came flooding back with a vengeance. Bai Su felt she had failed yet again and that pain broke her. She felt, she could no longer continue to drag and harm Bai Zhen.

If it was not for the fear that her sudden death would have driven him to shock, Bai Su would have detonated herself on the day their daughter passed, and died with those who harmed her daughter, but she couldn't quite do it when she saw Bai Zhen's distraught face.

But now, she was only biding her time, and when the opportune moment presented itself, she would use it to end her life so Bai Zhen could have a chance at a fresh start, no matter how deluded it seemed, she hoped her absence, could maybe provide him with a chance to start over.

"Maybe he could go to the green fog region. You try to hide it, but I know you're curious about the world outside of this range and have only stayed because of me.



After I am gone, I hope...you will live your best life. I will keep Qin'er company for both of us. It's the least I can do for all you have sacrificed for us. Meeting you is my greatest fortune.." she thought as she burned every detail of Bai Zhen's face into her soul.

Chapter 647 Growing list of suspects

"Considering their relationship, the fire adler bear is less likely to blurt out that he helped Bai Qin evolve into a flood dragon.

Meifeng didn't know much about the evolution other than the fact the fire adler bear did something.

As for these two.."

Yang Qing's eyes fell on the distraught couple.

"I doubt they'd let it slip. So how did the Blue Soul Flame Syndicate find out? With the fire adler bear's presence, I doubt they would have managed to sneak in during the evolution process..

Besides what would they even be doing here in the first place, not unless they know about the other perilous zones....

No, I highly doubt it. It would need the skills of a domain expert to discover those locations. So the only way they could have found out about her is if Bai Qin slipped up and some cultivator found out or one of the parties involved leaked it...Jiang Xiang.."

With a narrow gaze, Yang Qing asked,

"This may be hard to ask, but forgive me, I need to do it.."

"I doubt it can be harder than losing a child. Please ask.." Bai Zhen said with a mournful smile.

"Your daughter evolved into a flood dragon but that meant all traces of the treasure bone had dissolved to form her current body. Whatever value the treasure bone held, had already been expended and not a trace of it was left.

The only evidence of it is your daughter's body. But from what I heard, the attackers never took your daughter's body with them. What was missing?"

Bai Zhen's pupils trembled slightly before it turned into a forlorn look.

"Her heart and wisdom pearl.."

It was just a few words, but it seemed to have sapped his entire life energy as his back hunched over and he bent his head weakly.

"Her evolution used 10% of what was in the treasure bone, and even though it was smelted into her body in the process, the bulk of it was sealed away thanks to the scroll Adler used.

Its features were split into two parts and sealed. The two parts were her heart and wisdom pearl..."

His voice seemed to grow fainter and weaker, every time he talked.

"The wisdom pearl sealed the Dao insights, and the heart sealed the complete flood dragon essence which encompassed the innate attributes of a flood dragon.

Even at the first stage of the palace realm, she could barely scratch at the surface of the abilities and powers contained within the treasure bone.

She could only slowly contemplate it over time, with the seals releasing every improvement made so it doesn't end up harming her.

When she got attacked...."

Bai Zhen paused briefly with a pained expression.

"When she got murdered, she had barely scratched the surface. All she had at the time was the raw strength of a flood dragon to work with but even then she couldn't use it properly. Which was why she easily fell to them.." Bai Zhen softly said with an air of despondency around him and his wife.

Yang Qing seemed to hesitate to ask something after seeing their moods but eventually decided to go on with it.

"Jiang Xiang...What do you know about him?" Yang Qing asked, calmly observing their reactions.

Bai Su's pupils constricted in shock as her face went pale, while Bai Zhen still wore the same look of grief.

Bai Zhen absentmindedly answered,

"Not much only whispers and what others know about him from his time here. He never liked confrontations and was about the only one who liked interacting with humans.

He was always curious and knowledgeable about a lot of things. He may have not been feared as the metal moon tornado lynx but he was respected just as well.

He helped a few spirit beasts reach the palace realm. You could say he had a few pupils spread about the range about a dozen or less.."

Yang Qing observed the two for a brief moment before he decided to keep his suspicions to himself but from the way Bai Su was looking at him and her pallid face, she seemed to have guessed his thoughts.

Yang Qing felt there was a likelihood that Jiang Xiang may have been involved in the leak as one of the remaining people who knew about the existence of the treasure bone, other than the fire adler bear, the Bai family, the fire adler bear's master and the unfathomable figure who gave it away.

Of the seven figures, he was the one Yang Qing suspected. The others stood nothing to gain by revealing the information and when it came to Jiang Xiang, Yang Qing didn't know what he stood to gain either, he

was the only one without a deep connection or investment to the parties involved, which makes it selling them out, very easy.

Seeing how distraught they were, Yang Qing thought it wise not to add to their woes, though from Bai Su's reaction, it was already too late for that.

"I'll have to get the Shadow Hawk Division to investigate him and his whereabouts. How he acquired those resources needs to be investigated too.

Does the White Rose Pavillion pay that well? Maybe he is highly valued, but if he is, then why would he collude with the Blue Soul Flame Syndicate?

It makes no sense.."? Yang Qing thought.

Even though he suspected Jiang Xiang, it was only because he was the only one to suspect, but even then, the reason for his collusion made no sense considering his background or even strength.

Even though the White Rose Pavilion was a merchant organization, its foundations ran deep as any ancient rank 1 sect, and one could even it ran deeper even, if the rumors surrounding them were true.

Rumor had it that they had managed to form branches of their pavilion in the Northern and Western Continent. To achieve something like that showed their incredible reach as traversing the oceans to other continents was tumultuous, let alone gaining a foothold in those continents.

The White Rose Pavilion had done both. Yang Qing struggled to imagine why the eclipsed spiritweave fox would collude with the Blue Soul Flame Syndicate which was miles away from having the same accumulations as the White Rose Pavilion. It made no sense to him at all.

This was one of the reasons he opted to keep those suspicions to himself.

"Hopefully the Shadow Hawks can find something to make sense of this. What a convoluted mess.."  
Yang Qing thought with a sigh as his gaze fell on the two.

"There is something I need to tell you both.." he suddenly said with a somber tone.

Chapter 648 Passing The Sentence On Behalf Of Xie Grandparents (1)

The couple looked up as they sensed the graveness in Yang Qing's tone.

"Before I say anything else, I'd like to let you both know something. It's more of a promise really.." Yang Qing said as he straightened his spine.

His presence seemed to have shifted, as the couple could feel the force of the world being released from his body.

"How could his body contain so much Dao force within it.." thought Bai Zhen in surprise as he felt the ethereal and majestic force swirling around Yang Qing.

Even though the density of it wasn't the same as his, with Yang Qing still being an early-stage palace realm expert, the dao force within him felt more ancient, more primordial like something that had been there when the world was being born.

Bai Zhen couldn't help but suspect that Yang Qing had mastered a superior Dao which he used to breakthrough to the palace realm.

While he couldn't investigate it further, but he felt it bore the same weight as the dao of the flood dragon whose treasure bone they used.

He couldn't help but sigh. Over the past few days, he had seen things that he would have never imagined and it was all centered on the Order.

"Maybe I should have gone out more like Su'er asked..but..none of that matters now.." Bai Zhen thought with a sigh.

"The Blue Soul Flame Syndicate will pay for what they did to your daughter and our people.

All involved will face death or worse and the organization itself will face our wrath.." firmly said Yang Qing.

"Many thanks for that, Branch Chief.." Bai Zhen said with an air of awkwardness around him.

He wasn't the only one, as Bai Su's gaze drifted a bit in shame when Yang Qing said the words 'our people'.

The two had done a number on them, and Bai Su had even eaten one of them.

"But here is the thing.." Yang Qing's tone turned low as his gaze fell on the two.

"The Blue Soul Flame Soul Syndicate owes you a debt for killing your daughter and in that same vein, you owe the Order a debt too.

You killed one of our own and her name was Xie Wen.."

A sense of heaviness descended in the area.

"We lost two of our own that day. One died at the hands of one of the deacons of the Blue Soul Flame Crow Syndicate and another died at yours...the one you killed.." Yang Qing paused.

"Her name was Xie Wen.." he added in reiteration.

Two inquisitors had lost their lives in the battle against the Blue Soul Flame Syndicate and the two obsidian serpents.

One was Xie Wen and the other was Liu Bai and they had both been at the peak stage of the core formation realm. They both had blue-grade cores.

In most branches spread about the continent the lineup of the Deer Mountain Branch could be considered an outlier as all its members had blue-grade cores. Usually, it would be one or two with the rest having quasi-blue grade cores but because of the dangers of the Deer Mountain Range and the lack of control by the kingdom, the Order stacked up the branch from top to bottom with talented personnel.

From what Yang Qing read about them, he knew Xie Wen was close to becoming a blue-grade talisman maker, while Liu Bai had improved in leaps and bounds in his herbology skills. Most of the herbs growing around the branch had been personally nurtured by him.

Had any one of them reached the palace realm, they would have been relocated to either become a branch chief, or chief inquisitor or they would have been sent to top-tier branches that had a peak palace realm branch chief or domain level branch chief.

But, alas, both, died.

"You owe us a life and in as much as we understand the circumstances that led to it, a debt is a debt and it must be collected..."

Yang Qing couldn't help but sigh.

"Usually when we lose someone, the path we need to take is clear. We eradicate everyone and everything involved but your case is a rather complicated one.

Others out there might think us champions of justice, or nosey do-gooders ruining the order of things by protecting the weak from the strong.

But in truth, we only do those things to not bring shame to our home. To us, it's us against everyone else whether we saved you or punished you.

Of course, within our ranks, there are definitely those who truly believe in the cause but even for them, none of it bears more weight to them than the wellbeing of their fellow compatriot. We are all we have of each other against the rest of the world.

This is why, whenever something like this happens to one of us, we are no different from any sect, clan, cultivator, or spirit beast out there, who will do anything by fair means or foul to avenge them..."

The Order just like any other institution filled with people, was not completely perfect. It was not without its internal disputes here and there but it was just surface level and never festered and the reason for that was the bond they shared or rather the foe, they shared.

It was them against the entire continent. They never treated the continent as something to save but as an enemy, they had to defend against.

It was an unnerving reality to carry, and the only thing that made it easier to shoulder was the thought that they were not alone in it. Every person within the Order helped each other carry, which was why when death occurred from a member of the Order, even if they may not personally know them, the heaviness of it was no different than losing kin.

It was why they would never let anyone off, no matter the cost, they would exact their vengeance on the matter.

The Cataclysmic Star Sword Sect, an ancient rank 1 sect with a deep heritage fell from grace because of that very reason. It had stood the test of time for almost 200,000 years. Though Yang Qing didn't know the full story, he did hear they did something to a member of the Order, which brought the full wrath of the Order on them.

17 soul formation experts were slaughtered that day and two-thirds of the sect along with all their allies who stood up to defend them were razed to the ground. Whoever and whatever was left of the sect got sealed and the seal has remained there ever since, a constant reminder and deterrent to all, on what the Order would do to them.

The Order did pay some cost for what they did, but there was no regret and they would do it over again. This was a tale told to all students just as they were about to graduate. A lesson for them to look out for each other above everything else.

"Because of the unique circumstances surrounding the events, the collector of your debt can only be someone with a close relation to your victim, Xie Wen.



Whatever they decide, goes. If they were to ask for your execution at this very moment, it would be done.

They could decide to hold off on it and take your lives themselves, wherever that may be and we would abide by it. No matter what achievements you may make working for the Order, it would not change it..."

"But...!" the Bai couple couldn't help but stammer when they realized the implications of Yang Qing's words and why he had said that their daughter's grievance would be addressed.

Chapter 649 Passing Sentence On Behalf Of Xie Grandparents (2)

At first, Bai Zhen had assumed it was the Order's way of reaffirming them so that they would give their all for the Order once indentured into their service for life, but now, it seemed it was because they could very well be executed as soon as that very instant.

The couple's fight response triggered but they were sealed in place by the ascendant artifact's spirit and couldn't move an inch. It was like a middle-stage domain expert effortlessly held them in place. Their qi and movements were all sealed in an instant.

"It's a debt, Bai Zhen.." Yang Qing softly said as his eyes fell on the duo.

"My friend was among them.." he added as his gaze turned distant.

"And he doesn't have any family. Had he died at your hands, despite me being sympathetic to your plight, especially after hearing the whole story..."

I am ashamed to say this, but had he died at your hands, I would have fought you both to the death the moment my cultivation base reached a level where I could hold my own against the two of you.

Which by my estimates should be the fifth stage. It would not have mattered to me whether you personally avenged your daughter or not. When the moment came...I would take your lives.."

Despite the coldness of his words, Yang Qing's eyes shone, with a tragic sympathy as he looked at the couple.

"I was given your sentence a day ago by the last living relatives of Xie Wen, her grandparents..." Yang Qing said as he took out a scroll that was cloaked with gold gold-flamed eagle around it.

The Bai couple felt their bodies involuntary tremble when the scroll appeared. An overbearing and heavenly presence was released by the scroll that made it seem like they were facing the judgment of the heavens itself.

"They have decided for the punishment of killing their granddaughter, you are to live. Live enduring the same pain and loss that they do..."

Yang Qing moved his eyes from the scroll and looked at the two.

"I know the look of those looking to die.." he said with a low tone.

"I, Yang Qing, in my capacity as a judge of the Order, hereby enact the sentence entrusted to me by Xie Liang and Xie Liqi..."

You are forbidden to take your lives in any form whatsoever whether by suicide or reckless action with intent to die.

You are to do everything to live and survive in the pursuant of your duties for the Order and you're to do so, to your last breath.."

The gold-flamed eagle let out a screech that seemed to carry the weight and the authority of the heavens within it as the scroll burst into golden lights that merged together with the gold-flamed eagle to form two gold daggers with eagle talons as handles.

The daggers were filled with ancient-looking runes that carried the voice of the Dao within them.

The couple felt a terrifying presence coming from the two daggers, much more terrifying than anything they had felt. Even the roars of the spirit beasts that came from the purple forest didn't come close to the terrifying aura surrounding the daggers.

Before they could react, the two daggers suddenly launched themselves toward their foreheads, disappearing swiftly within them.

It looked like their foreheads had transformed into water surfaces the moment the daggers made contact with them. A faint ripple appeared, and the daggers disappeared smoothly into their foreheads.

Immediately after, gold runic feather symbols simultaneously flashed and appeared on their foreheads before disappearing an instant later.

The couple didn't feel any pain or sudden changes to their bodies, however, they could feel some unfathomable power resting within their bodies like an overseer and controller.

A moment later, the couple turned to each other in shock because they realized something was different. The thoughts they harbored before, the ones they dared not tell each other, would be blocked at the slightest recall like a foggy memory that one couldn't quite grasp.

"Your souls and mental sea have been marked by the aura from the sealing flying dagger of the celestial river of forgetfulness.

That seal will enforce the sentence. Even at the brink of death, you can forget dying with its aura within you. You will live until your last. It will not leave you until then, not even if you reach the soul formation realm. You can forget ridding yourself of its abilities.." Yang Qing said as he slowly stood up whilst also releasing the restriction placed on the couple's bodies by the ascendant-grade artifact.

"Tomorrow you will be leaving Deer Mountain Range for good.." Yang Qing said with a sigh.

His sudden news sent tumultuous shock waves to the two.

"Why?" Bai Zhen weakly asked.

Deer Mountain Range was all he had ever known and even though he was held captive, he still felt some odd comfort he was still within the confines of the Range. Even with the place now holding painful memories, it still did not erase his sentiments to it.

"The people you fought to the death with, my colleagues, they will come back here. How would they feel with you around?"

"Would you share a place with the people who murdered your daughter?" Yang Qing asked as he saw the two go through a myriad of emotions.

Bai Zhen looked like he had aged even more because of the news.

"I am sorry but you can not remain here...and also your duties, they will take you away from here. You could not stay here..." he gently said.

"You will be kept apprised of all developments small or big concerning your daughter, and should we find the two deacons, we will take you to them or bring them to you for you to do as you will.

I hope..." Yang Qing paused for a bit.

"That it will bring you some comfort. Take care Bai Zhen, Bai Su and I am sorry for your loss..." Yang Qing said as he cupped his fists at the duo.

After his apology, he turned and left the space, leaving the couple to sort through their emotions and the future that awaited them.

Chapter 650 New Case

Yang Qing let out another sigh as he exhaled the turbid air concentrated within his heart. He raised his head as he stared at the solitary moon hanging up above them surrounded by countless stars.

He couldn't help but wonder what his reaction would be if he left a place he called home for years and that had to abruptly leave the place.

"I did run away from the Yang Mountain hold back then to the unfamiliar Order.." muttered Yang Qing with a wry smile.

"But I had a choice in the matter at least.." he added as his gaze fell slightly on the statue before he turned and decided to take a walk around the branch in the hopes it would uplift his mood.

He knew the obsidian serpent had gotten off easy in comparison to what their fates would have been had they fallen to any other party that wasn't the Order and one could even argue if it was not for Xie Wen's grandparents, the situation would have ended similar to what would have happened had they killed a member of another organization, and that was their execution.

And more than likely it wouldn't stop just there for those organizations, as they would likely go ahead and slaughter any other party associated with the couple such as the fire adler bear and maybe even Meifeng, and any other spirit beast they were even remotely acquainted with.

All these would be done under the banner of killing the chickens to scare the monkeys or an ironical form of preserving peace by eliminating roots to avoid future trouble.

Yang Qing slowly walked around the footpaths leading around the various rivers and peaks around the branch with wine in hand as he sorted out his thoughts or made peace with them.

He had mixed feelings on the whole thing. He felt the couple had been dealt a bad hand that didn't stop giving. On the other hand he felt some relief that they got to keep their lives at least. Another part of him, which was why he kept sighing with every step he took was, had the sentence come as an immediate execution, even though he was relieved the couple kept their life, he would have been okay with their execution for some reason.

Yang Qing couldn't help but wonder if he had gotten slightly hard-hearted ever since the Ice Emerald Sect incident.

After a few steps and passionate swigs of wine, Yang Qing came to a stop before one of the ponds in the area and a wry smile appeared on his face.

"I guess I really am petty like they always say. The thought of being stolen from bothers me a lot.." muttered Yang Qing after he questioned his heart over and over during the walk on why he could easily accept the death of the couple.

"The sealing flying dagger of the celestial river of forgetfulness is terrifying as advertised. Its title as one of the four anchoring treasures of the Order isn't for show. Just its aura alone made me feel like I had the power of the entire galaxy in the palm of my hands, what about the real thing.." muttered Yang Qing as he looked at his stretched-out palm recalling the sensation he had when he activated the scroll.

The scroll with the sentence had been imbued with the aura of the sealing flying dagger of the celestial river of forgetfulness.

The dagger had been made by a fragment born of the power of the Origin Dao that pervaded the Celestial Ocean which was the Ocean that separated the southern continent and the western continent.

Just like the Millionsfold Treasure Ocean or the Bestial Churning Sea, the Celestial Ocean had its unique features just like the two.

The Celestial Ocean went by other names such as the ocean of ancient voices and scenes, or the ocean of dreams and terror.

All who walked through it would feel like they had been transported to another realm. A dream-like realm with celestial lighting and voices that either boomed like thunder or were silent like faint whispers aimed at lulling an infant to sleep.

It was filled with contrasting sceneries, one minute one would feel like they were walking into an immortal banquet filled with all sorts of splendor and opulence, and the next one would feel like they were walking in the most horrific place they could ever imagine. A place of wailing terror.

The Celestial Ocean was an unfathomable and contradictory place. On surface value, it wasn't as opulent as the Millionsfold Treasure Ocean where as long as you looked hard enough harvesting an ascendant-

grade treasure wasn't impossible, and if you were lucky enough, leaving with a saint-grade wasn't impossible; it also wasn't as horrendous as the Bestial Churning Sea where a domain expert would lose their life within seconds if they were careless; and it wasn't as ordinary looking as the Blue Origin Ocean.

However, what it did have going for it was its boundless mystery.

Was it an ocean, a mysterious realm, or some massive grotto?

A domain expert could step in there and end up hearing whispers that destroy their soul and body and a qi refinement cultivator can stumble into the ocean and walk into an immortal garden manifestation in the ocean and come out a peak domain expert.

It was usually a roll of the dice, how it pans out for all who stumble onto it, you could crumble to dust or reach the heavens with just one step.

The strange voices could contain secrets and deep profundities that would reveal countless mysteries of cultivation, while on the other hand, the voices could contain curses and attacks that would destroy the body and soul of all who heard them.

Soul formation experts were the only ones known to be able to traverse the ocean safely without being subject to its whims but even then, it wasn't a complete guarantee as there have been records of a few being affected by it.

There was a senior figure of a rank 1 clan at the soul formation realm who once ventured into the Ocean to comprehend the insights contained within it and ended up getting lost within it for 4,000 years and it is unknown what happened to him during those 4,000 years. Said figure immediately locked himself up away from all affairs of the clan the moment he came out of the ocean.

His case wasn't the isolated one, as there have been reports of soul formation experts being affected by the Celestial Ocean. Though fatalities were not yet recorded among them, it did show the difficulty of traversing the Ocean.

The dagger was something born from that Ocean. Whatever made that Ocean function the way it did, the same force and power was in the fragment used in creating the dagger. It was this origin that made

the sealing flying dagger of the celestial river of forgetfulness one of the most powerful treasures the Order has, to the point of being ranked as an anchoring treasure of the Order.

The Anchoring treasures were considered the Order's ultimate trump cards. Should the worst happen, they could depend on them to preserve a spark of themselves. lights

Before yesterday, even though Yang Qing knew there were four such treasures, he only knew the identity of one of them and that was the object of his terror and complaints, the black hallowed building that garnered hope, awe, fear, and hatred to all who saw it, the main building of the courts of the Order.

Yang Qing had a love-and-hate relationship with that building. On one hand, it gave him sleepless nights, and on the other, it was the reason he never wanted to leave. The entire building was a living artifact and one of the most powerful the Order had. As long as he was in there, even the Holy Lands could forget about reaching him.

Within its confines, Yang Qing would even dare bad mouth the sect masters of the two holy lands without fear. Of course, his paranoia wouldn't let him do it, but he always reveled at the idea, that if he wanted to, he could do it.

How many people out there could say had the option of bad-mouthing the two figures, he did. Others may not know this, but that reason was one of the things that motivated him to go to the courtroom every day.

Other than the building, he didn't know about the other anchors up until yesterday, when Ye Xun passed on the scroll whilst explaining a brief background such as it contained the aura of the sealing flying dagger of the celestial river of forgetfulness.

From the little she touched on, Yang Qing knew sealing memories wasn't the only thing it could do, it went even as far as isolating karma and erasing one's existence even though they be alive, the dagger can make it as though they never existed. That person would be erased from the mind of everyone who ever knew him/her or will ever know them.

"If its aura alone could seal the impulses of late-stage palace realm spirit beasts, how terrifying must the real thing be.." wondered Yang Qing as he twirled his fingers with an incredulous gaze.



Yang Qing continued with his nightly walk and for some reason he absentmindedly found himself out of the branch, heading to Meifeng's cavern.

He couldn't help but smile wryly to himself as he walked there like he was going to his own backyard.

Meifeng as always was ecstatic when she saw him, and she was just about to kickstart their regular routine before Yang Qing stopped her as he decided to break the news of the obsidian couple leaving the Deer Mountain Range to her.

"Adler is sure to be heartbroken about this.." said Meifeng with a worried gaze.

"Well, after he comes out of his seclusion, if he wants to see them I will leave you with a talisman that he can use to communicate with them. He can use it to meet up with them after if he wants.." Yang Qing said as he took out one of the Order issued communication talismans from his storage ring.

Meifeng's eyes widened as she slowly caressed the light green jade talisman filled with white runes that created a mesmerizing circle dance every time she slid her hand through its surface.

"Could I have one like this too?" she hesitantly asked.

"It's to call you after you leave.." she hurriedly added as her eyes darted in anxiousness that Yang Qing would reject her request.

"It's yours, I only said Adler can use it, but the owner of that talisman is you. It's why I brought it.." Yang Qing said with a light chuckle.

"It's mine! You're sure!" Meifeng said, her demeanor and tone unable to hide her excitement with the crescent moon moth circling around her as if mirroring her excitement.

"It is.." Yang Qing gently said as he went on to explain to her how to use it.

Afterward like always, the lazy green-haired youth, a shut-in tree, a bird, and two insects shared songs, dances, wine, and skewered octopus meat all through the night.

Yang Qing left when it was almost dawn, leaving Meifeng and the river melody skylark trying to outdo each other in who had the most flare and splendor when singing.

Yang Qing couldn't help but laugh when he recalled that Meifeng never let go of the communication talisman all through the night. She even called Yang Qing over a dozen times with it just to confirm it was functional and to feed the excitement of owning a communication talisman.

"Maybe giving it to her was a mistake.." he muttered with a shake of his head as he took out his talisman to see Meifeng calling.

Lacking the heart to reject the call, Yang Qing picked up, and like the dozen times before, the call was just Meifeng rumbling in excitement that she had a communication talisman and how it was.

She even impatiently asked Yang Qing to rush to the branch so she could test the range of the talisman.

Yang Qing laughed in defeat as he made his way to the branch, however that laugh was frozen when he saw Luo Meili outside the branch with four people in tow who had different robes.

"Meili.." he hesitantly called out.

"Boss!.... Good, you're here. We have a case.." Luo Meili pleasantly said as she turned to greet him.

"Good.." Yang Qing answered with an awkward smile trying to mask the twitch in his eye.

Right about now, feeding Meifeng's communication talisman frenzy didn't seem so bad in comparison.